

# ARTNEWS

## MARCH 1970

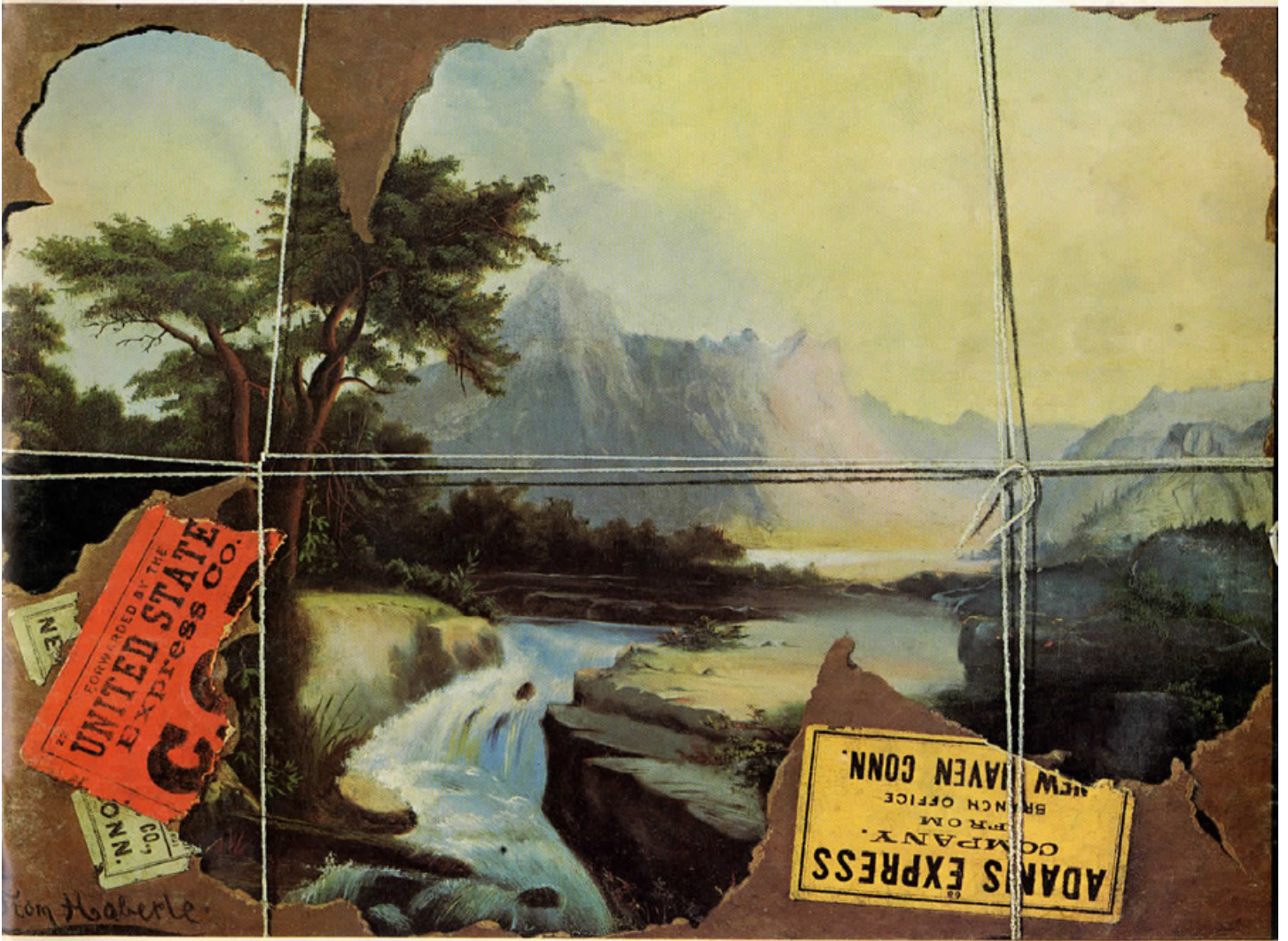
### REVIEWS AND PREVIEWS: BRICE MARDEN , ROBERT DURAN

By Carter Ratcliff

Brice Marden, Robert Duran (Bykert) showed new works. Marden's drawings are all black with an incised grid; his paintings are neutral monotonous. In both mediums, Marden applies heavy physical pressure to the surface. In the drawings, this causes the paper to warp or wave slightly; in the paintings, it gives the sense that the support is pushing outward through the paint. Marden's method is exaggerated—one could say hyperbolic—with the result that it clarifies action. Duran showed high-keyed canvases pierced by simple shapes; the effect is of an engaging diagram. The voids created by leaving the canvas blank are filled in with brushwork and staining; this creates positive versions of the voids. The two versions don't match exactly and so the contrasting colors blur into each other causing complexities in the relations of shape to field. In later works, dark hues are substituted for lighter ones in the field; the results, however, are not muffled; Duran's sharp value contrasts manage to turn near-blacks into subtle hues.

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# ARTnews



## Reviews and Previews

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found in highway underpasses and viaducts. It is odd to realize just how theatrical such a mundane subject can be made, but Manning has done it. M.L.

**Irving Marantz** [Babcock; March 21-April 10] shows a series of small acrylics: quasi-abstract landscapes peopled vaguely and variously with nudes, horsemen and horses. Exploiting the explosive bright hues in small densely packed bleeding patches, he creates surfaces of fulminating activity. Despite the limited size, a great deal is crammed together, sometimes felicitously. K.K.

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**Reginald Marsh** [Rehn; March 2-28], leading Social-Realist of the '30s and '40s, died in 1954. His work wears exceedingly well. In this prime selection (mostly owned by the artist's widow) of major temperas, oils and large ink drawings, the way he painted the Bowery, Coney Island, etc., seems to count for more than the subject itself. A fresh look at his bursting chiaroscuro molding plump strippers or straphangers finds their flesh melting into arabesques of mass. Gauzy fabrics clinging to voluptuous limbs now seem a bit closer to Tiepolo than to Kenneth Hayes Miller (his teacher). He was a masterly draftsman who could turn line into poignant flophouse derelicts. His last period, 1947-52, was the simplest, stateliest, strongest, particularly in the cool, luminous, grey-white ink washes that contain no black at all. R.B.

**Matta** [Byron; to March 4] is seen in canvases dating from the 1950s to the '60s. The show includes excellent examples of his work, with its intriguing hints of Abstract-Expressionist automatism resolving, from time to time, into a more directly entomological iconography of wings, legs, thoraxes and flicking antennae. M.B.

**Frank McCall\*** [Bowery] uses a seemingly spontaneous Abstract-Expressionist vocabulary of loosely-contoured forms, drips and dribbles to depict landscapes. This spontaneity, however, is carefully controlled. There is a slight sense of letdown as all details are perhaps too ruthlessly discarded, but McCall has made Vermont mountains and country houses glow with a semblance based more on light and color than on description. J.G.

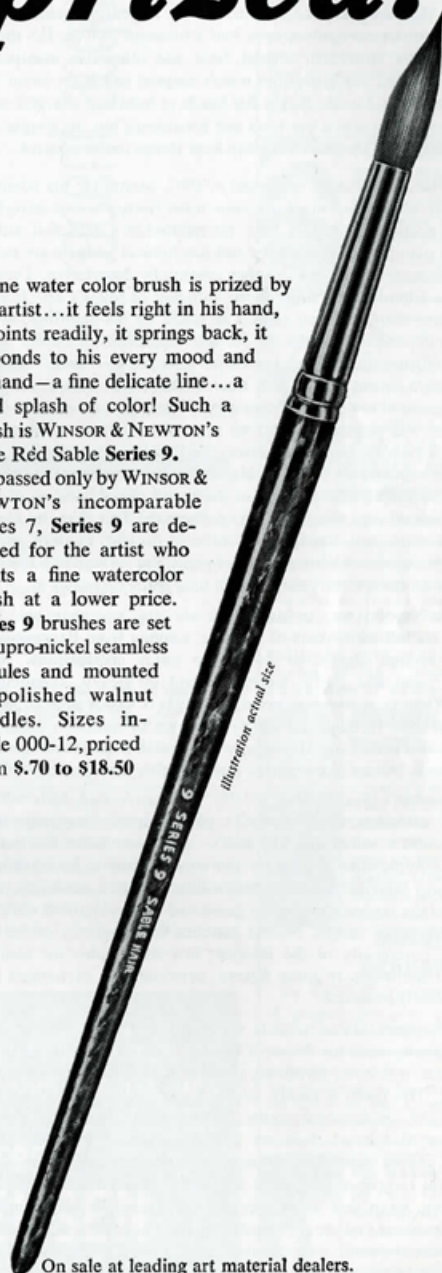
**Henry Meyer** [Kosmopolitan; to March 14], 21-year-old South African now living in Toronto, protests with big buttons against protest buttons. Titles (*Up Tight; America, America*) and subjects (frankfurters, breasts, polka dots) are familiar, color is clean and bright, design is attractive. R.B.

**James Meyer\*** [Spectrum], a young Pennsylvania sculptor, used cut steel and aluminum plate, polished and automobile lacquered to create complicated cut, bent and serrated planes peeling open from a quasi-geometric core. Though an astute use of reflections and vacancies afforded a moment of interest, the works contain an unnecessary amount of linear and decorative activity and do not work particularly well in the round. K.K.

\*First one-man show in New York

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